Guiding Principles

1. **Cost to Society of High School Drop-Outs**
   1.1. Nearly 24,700 students did not graduate from Arizona's high schools in 2010; the lost lifetime earnings in Arizona for that class of dropouts alone total over $6.4 billion.
   1.2. Arizona could save as much as $265 million in health care costs over the lifetimes of each class of dropouts had they earned their diplomas.
   1.3. If Arizona's high schools graduated all of their students ready for college, the state could save as much as $104 million a year in community college remediation costs and lost earnings.
   1.4. Arizona's economy could see a combination of crime-related savings and additional revenue of about $184 million each year if the male high school graduation rate increased by just 5 percent.
2. **Adopted the National Dropout Prevention frameworks for guiding the work of the taskforce. The following four areas are the task force's current areas of priority. Recommendations should fall in at least one of these areas.**
   2.1. After school opportunities, mentoring, and tutoring
   2.2. Individualized instruction, active learning
   2.3. Alternative schools, Career and Technical Education
   2.4. Early Literacy Development
3. **Recommendations from the task force should align with at least one of the following four categories in which the Arizona Ready Council can make relevant recommendations to the Governor.**
   3.1. Communications (i.e. Arizona Ready and other partners)
   3.2. Rules & Regulations (i.e. State Board of Education or ADE)
   3.3. Funding (i.e. state budget, grant procurement, or partnerships)
   3.4. Statutory (i.e. legislative change)
4. **Recommendations from the task force should focus on statewide frameworks and incentives for meeting statewide goals, and should avoid endorsing one particular program over another.**
   4.1. Research shows that funding programs outside of community context is ineffective
   4.2. Recommendations need to be politically viable in a strong local control environment
   4.3. Recommendations should align with funding task force – looking at the "bigger picture" of overall incentives

Next Steps:
   1. Conduct best practice research based on data analysis of successful counties and schools to generate additional recommendations
   2. Flesh out each of the recommendations chosen by the task force
   3. Research any additional recommendations suggested by the task force
   4. Conduct a budget analysis on each of the recommendations and align to funding task force

Graduation/Dropout Prevention Taskforce

First Set of Initial Draft Recommendations for Discussion:

1) **With the understanding that all students must graduate college and career ready, create an additional measure for graduation rate, in addition to "Four years and one summer" (national compact definition):**
   - Four years and one summer plus GEDs
   - Five years plus GED
   - Six years plus GED

   Recommendation Area: N/A

   Recommendation Category: Rules & Regulations

   Discussion Question: Which of these should we collect and report data on?

   Discussion Question: What is college and career ready in relation to an extended graduation rate definition?

2) **Create safety net for students who drop-out such as drop-out prevention strategies similar to Texas**, which incentivizes students who either meet benchmarks or graduate by providing additional funds (also discussed at funding task force)

   Recommendation Area: After School Opportunities, Mentoring, and Tutoring, Individualized Instruction, Active Learning, Alternative Schools, Career and Technical Education

   Recommendation Category: Statutory, Rules & Regulations, Funding

   Discussion: Are there revisions needed to the current drop out recovery law?

   Discussion: Does the TX framework seem like a good model for AZ? Are there other frameworks we should be looking at?

   The Texas Dropout Recovery Pilot Program (TDRPP) began in 2008 with competitive grants made to 22 education organizations throughout the state including district schools, charter schools, institutes of higher education, country departments of education, and nonprofit education organizations. TDRPP allowed grantees to assist students under the age of 25 who had dropped out of school to either earn a high school diploma or demonstrate college readiness. TDRPP used a pay for performance model which included base funding of up to $150,000 (planning, infrastructure, and implementation), performance funding of $250 (up to a maximum of $1000) for each student who achieved a specified academic benchmark and $1000 for each student who completed the program. (Grantees which were not eligible for payments based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA) could also earn up to $4000 in other payments for each TRDPP student demonstrating progress.) The first cycle (2008 - 2010) included 22 grantees who received a total of $3,219,316 in base funding and were

authorized for up to $2,726,000 in performance funding (realization of performance funds was 43%). Grantees served 4,141 students who had previously dropped out (31% completed the program).

Programs had to include maximum flexibility to meet individual student needs including academic and social supports (such as child care and transportation), open entry and exit from the program, a variety of instructional programming including online courses, and multiple scheduling options, including weekend and evening classes. All teachers had to have at least a bachelor's degree.

Texas is currently working with Jobs for the Future (JFF) to provide professional development to TDRPP grantees and to assist in the development of model dropout recovery sites for replication. Texas also launched a Texas Dropout Recovery Network (TDRN) which offers PD institutes and webinars to members, an opportunity to connect individuals across the state engaged in the same work, updates on available resources, and a forum for recognition of program successes.

Texas also funds the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot (CDRP) which encourages partnerships between public schools and community organizations to reduce the number of students who drop out of school. Community organizations can include local businesses, local governments, law-enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and institutes of higher education. Grantees in this program must provide services in workforce readiness, academic support, student and family support, and attendance improvement. Schools are eligible for this program is more than 55% of their students have been identified as economically disadvantaged for the 3 preceding school years. In the first cycle (2008 - 2010), there were 6 grantees for this program. These grantees received $168,936 in funding (out of $226,578 awarded) and served 1,924 students. An evaluation of grantees and matched comparison schools showed that the program led to higher graduation rates, higher completion rates, and lower dropout rates.

3) **Transform CTE and usher in a new era of rigorous, relevant, and results-driven CTE.**

- **Align CTE pathways with post-secondary programs**

   Recommendation Area: Alternative Schools, Career and Technical Education

   Recommendation Category: Communication, Rules & Regulations

   Discussion question: Recommendations can include anything from communicating the need, helping to convene the partners, and helping to get resources aligned to getting this work done. An important next step here is to have CTE report.

   The CTE Program of Study Project was started last year under the Getting AHEAD project. The original goal of this project was to provide a mechanism that could advise Arizona students on a career pathway from high school to postsecondary completion with certification, associates or bachelor's degree. The information on the various pathways would include: courses (traditional/blended), competencies, location, sequence, etc., on an e-advising platform. The tool would advise students on career paths from electrician to neuro-surgeon, accountant to zoologist, automotive mechanic to astronomer. For example, a student/family wants to explore what is required to become a nurse practitioner or draftsman, they would be able to determine:
   a) Where is he/she now in the education continuum?

b) What is the course/learning/skills sequence he/she needs to follow, at what level of skills/competency to map out a pathway to completion to be ready to enter the workforce?
c) What are the pre-required academic skills to enter pathway at each level, high school/community college, university?
d) What is the job demand and compensation levels?
e) Does the certifier of the degree accept the transfer work of all course(s)/competencies for completion?

Rebecca McKay, Director of Technology at Arizona State University, developed the framework and started the work of identifying the CTE pathways through to baccalaureate degrees. The project currently rests within the Arizona Department of Education.

- **Fund or Incentivize CTE programs and JTEDS that promote high wage/high need industries to drive Arizona's economic prosperity**

  Recommendation Area: Alternative Schools, Career and Technical Education

  Recommendation Category: Statutory, Rules & Regulations, Funding

  Discussion Question: Below is information about how CTE is funded in Indiana. Is this a good model for AZ? Are there better models? (This idea is currently under consideration in the funding task force)

  Indiana's Career Technical Education Grant program that distributes funds to LEAs per CTE credit hour based on the course area's labor market demand and wage data. For example, in Indiana, districts receive $450 per CTE credit hour in areas that have above average labor market need and wages but only $225 per CTE credit hour in areas that have below average labor market need and wages.

- **Implement ECAPS with fidelity - increasing staff, funding, and training, add consequences and incentives**

  Recommendation Area: After School Opportunities, Mentoring, and Tutoring, Individualized Instruction, Active Learning, Alternative Schools, Career and Technical Education

  Recommendation Category: Communication, Statutory, Rules & Regulations, Funding

  Discussion Question: What is the best way to make ECAPs meaningful, used as intended, and work with counselors?

4) **Implement more intensive kindergarten reading programs, tied to Move on When Reading and new K-2 funding, and including more data analysis and remediation**

  Recommendation Area: Early Literacy Development

  Recommendation Category: Statutory, Rules & Regulations, Funding

Discussion Question: What are key best practices in providing an overall context or incentive for early literacy that we can build on, particularly in Kindergarten (where we have the most influence)? For Pre-School, what are our policy levers?

Discussion Question: Can we build on the "Read On Arizona" Grant to the National League of Cities and Towns? It focuses on the leading causes preventing students from reading at grade level: school readiness, school absenteeism and summer learning loss. For example, we can use it a starting point for a framework on early literacy, much like the Texas framework on drop-out prevention.